Emerging Programs of Cooperation

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METROPOLITAN library cooperation is a subject which has received little special attention. Although library service in metropolitan areas has been rather thoroughly studied, most documentation has paid only scant attention to cooperation in the metropolitan environment. There is also considerable literature on cooperation among libraries, but it lacks delineation of developments and issues that relate specifically to the metropolitan environment. Furthermore, there is no thorough inventory of cooperative ventures from which one might derive general observations or draw a sample for systematic study. This paper is an attempt to provide a brief overview of elements that seem to juxtapose metropolitan librarianship and library cooperation. In its preparation, I have relied not only on the published literature,[1] but I have also received valuable assistance from extended personal conversations with leaders in planning and administration of metropolitan libraries and library cooperation.

Metropolitan regions have characteristics that contain both opportunities and constraints for cooperative activities. The metropolitan region is typically rich in library resources and hence is a seemingly fertile area for cooperation. This richness is at times almost outlandish. Woods noted in 1965 that 3,768, or more than 44 percent, of the nation's special libraries were in only 9 standard metropolitan areas.[2] In describing cooperation in New York City Cory noted that the New York Metropolitan Reference and Research Library Agency (METRO) had 50 members in 1968 with 400 library outlets and nearly 25,000,000 volumes in cataloged collections.[3] Metropolitan libraries are also diverse in subject orientation and heterogeneous in type.

The opportunity for cooperation among metropolitan libraries is both heightened and constrained by other environmental conditions. The typical metropolitan area contains a number of different political jurisdictions, which often include portions of several states. In addition

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metropolitan areas sustain a larger user population which may approach libraries in a variety of roles. For example, a faculty member of a college may also be a consultant to a local business firm and a citizen concerned about community affairs. A library user does not always discriminate among libraries with different missions, and often seeks assistance from a library whose resources are inappropriate to his needs. Furthermore, there is a growing sentiment that each citizen should have access to resources of the community regardless of agency mission.

Rich resources, complex political configurations, diverse libraries, and large and varied user populations provide urgent demand for mechanisms to bring users and resources together, opportunities for developing powerful information and library services, and constraints to easy solutions to problems of cooperation.

Blasingame and DeProspo note that "it is difficult to distinguish one library system from another in terms of purpose alone; rather, one is forced to describe each in terms of its constituency and organizational pattern."[4] This observation is valid for the study of library cooperative ventures of all kinds. The focus of this article is on programs for metropolitan constituencies and the organizational structures created for library cooperation. Major categories of library cooperative endeavors are delineated, and some of the special characteristics and problems that seem to derive from the metropolitan milieu are described.

METROPOLITAN LIBRARY COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES

Metropolitan library cooperative activities may be categorized into three groups according to constituency and goals: those organized to offer standard public library service to all citizens of a region; those organized to improve total community resources and services beyond the standard; and those organized to offer improved services to special categories of the population.

Standard Service to All Residents. For a number of years one of the key features of the American library movement has been the extension of basic library services to all citizens. The recent impetus for this work has been in state and federal subsidy programs, particularly the Library Services and Construction Act. In many metropolitan areas, and particularly in the suburbs, extension has been brought about through the formation of cooperative systems of public libraries.[5] In

such systems each library maintains its separate identity, but is encouraged to share resources and services with nearby communities. Membership in such cooperatives is voluntary, but only members receive the benefits of subsidies from the state. Separate regional system headquarters agencies may be established to coordinate system activities and to operate such special services as centralized acquisitions and cataloging and advanced reference work. In the past, large urban main libraries and their systems of branches have frequently been omitted from such cooperative ventures because they already offer basic library services to their constituents. In some areas, however, urban main libraries serve as the headquarters for library systems. Some urban libraries offer various centralized services under contract to libraries and library systems in outlying metropolitan and rural areas. There is a tendency for urban main libraries to serve as resource libraries for statewide networks to sustain local system services.[6] It is also not uncommon for city and county libraries to cooperate and even be combined. Combination results in a single library system, and thus ceases to be a cooperative activity.

Cooperative technical service activities have been popular and successful ventures for many of the nation's public library systems for many years. Hiatt's excellent analysis describes both early and recent examples of centralized processing for some technical processing routines in public libraries.[7] The Georgia State Department of Education began a catalog card distribution service in 1944 for books purchased with state funds. The service itself is supported by state aid funds to public libraries. The first system established by the New York State Library (in Watertown) in 1948 included centralized processing for its members. By 1966, sixty-three cooperative processing centers had been identified, many covering metropolitan area public libraries. The phenomenon was not universal in 1966: nineteen states did not have any center, and although approximately 2,000 independent libraries were members of regional processing centers, additional thousands were not.

Only a smattering of other interlibrary cooperation in technical service functions has been reported. The Nassau (N.Y.) Library System catalogs books under contract for four New Jersey libraries, and for a few others, including a high school library elsewhere in New York.[8] The University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee has also contracted to provide cataloging information for the S.C. Johnson Company Library in a nearby city.[9] The Ohio College Library Center cataloging system is making incursions into both public and academic libraries in a few

metropolitan areas outside of Ohio. These include Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Washington, D. C., among others, and soon will include several locations of the campuses of the State University of New York. There is a possibility that the automated cataloging system of the New York Public Library will be extended to provide service to other New York area libraries. Cooperative computerized cataloging is less than a trend, and certainly cannot yet be evaluated even where it has occurred. Given the current success of several of the large automated cataloging systems, this mode of operation may contribute to the solution of the problems of the maintenance and use of regional union catalogs.

Cooperative programs designed to assure that the public has access to at least a basic public library service do little or nothing to open access to specialized research material or to offer services beyond the public's general cultural interest. Nor do the programs offer any support to the many libraries other than those that serve the common public need. Hence another category of cooperative operation has been developing.

Extended and Advanced Service to All Residents. Faced with serious operational problems, poor financing, and strong pressures for information from various groups, metropolitan area libraries are increasingly involved in community-wide groups or councils. These groups have the major purpose of expanding library services to fill library and information needs not met by the basic public library service.

Generally, all libraries in a region may be involved in this activity. The New York State program to strengthen reference and research library resources under state aegis (the 3 Rs program) is often cited as a model for such an effort. This program provides state charters to local groups of citizens and librarians to improve library resources and services in support of advanced reference and research needs. Each regional group is governed by a locally selected board of trustees, and recruits local libraries as members. The state offers a subsidy to each region through the State Library. Because of official sponsorship and subsidy from the state, libraries of commercial agencies and libraries from nearby states are eligible for only a limited membership. They may participate fully in the work of the regional agency, and receive full service benefits, except subvention.[10]

The movement to bring the community's total library population together into a concerted planning and service effort is spreading.[11] Ohio, Indiana, Louisiana and Arizona, for example, have formed area

library councils or service authorities. In Arizona, the Library Reference and Service Systems are based on the governor's planning regions for other citizens' services. This is also happening on an interstate basis: the Council of Governments of the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan area, which includes the District of Columbia and parts of Virginia and Maryland, has long had a Librarian's Technical Committee. A new group has recently been formed around Cincinnati, involving libraries from Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana.[12]

Local area librarians have taken the lead in forming metropolitan library councils where this movement has not been undertaken by state governments. This has occurred recently in San Diego[13] and Milwaukee.[14] As in New York, it is not unusual to have a number of counties involved: the Illinois Regional Library Council covers five northern Illinois counties, including Cook County.[15] Some of these locally formed units are supported by small grants from the states' Library Services and Construction Act funds, which support many cooperative activities.

Membership in cooperatives tends to be voluntary, and in most instances is open to libraries of all types. No typical project or program of activity seems to be foreclosed. Frequently an early project of cooperatives is the inventorying of the resources and services of regional libraries. The purpose of such inventories is to improve the reference librarian's ability to locate materials or refer users to appropriate sources for help. At times, a published directory is produced. Sometimes more formal referral services are offered. The Central Access and Referral Service of the New York Metropolitan Reference and Research Library Agency (METRO)[16] and Information Passport (INFOPASS) of the Illinois Regional Library Council[15] are examples of efforts to increase the efficiency of use of the region's resources, and thereby to increase the probability of user satisfaction.

Research on community library problems is another project often undertaken by cooperative groups. The negotiation of universal borrowing privileges is also not uncommon. Other examples of cooperative projects include the shared acquisitions program for expensive materials operated by METRO. This is funded by a levy on member libraries that is related to their book budgets. Since METRO does not operate a library, the materials are located in an appropriate system member's collection. METRO also has been designated as a clearinghouse for government documents, provides consultation services for its members, has offered in-service training courses for

librarians via the city university television system and holds seminars on current library problems.[16] The Washington, D. C. Librarian's Technical Committee operates a telephone hotline to advertise library vacancies, and the Chicago groups are planning a clearinghouse for employment. Other proposed activities include such things as 24-hour-a-day "last-resort" reference service, guides to continuing educational opportunities for librarians, and union lists and surveys of collections of all kinds.

A more recent approach to the extension and advancement of services to all residents has been the development of the idea of the public library as a community information resource center. Five public library systems—Atlanta, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston and Queens Borough—are cooperating in the Neighborhood Information Centers Project, funded by HEW in 1972.[17] The headquarters office for the project is in Cleveland, and participants from all five cities meet together. A report from the Langston Hughes Branch in Cleveland summarized the mission of the project as providing to the public information about the more than forty agencies in the neighborhood which offer social services.[18]

In general, activities directed toward developing the public library as a community information resource involve cooperation, not with other libraries, but with those agencies which provide such citizen services as employment, mental health, welfare, housing and legal aid. Frequently a product of such cooperative efforts is the publication of a handbook or directory which the librarians can use to direct inquiries to appropriate sources.[19] In Rhode Island the reverse has occurred. The referral agency which handles United Fund inquiries not only supplied Rhode Island libraries with copies of the agencies' brochures, but also conducted a personal briefing in order to acquaint librarians with the various agencies and their activities.[20] A unique approach to familiarizing social service agencies and librarians with each other's activities has taken place in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Funded under the Higher Education Act of 1965, the Bridgeport Public Library has sponsored a number of workshops and visits by library staff to a variety of community agencies. The purpose of the visits is to improve communication and understanding between librarians and community agencies.[21]

In an era of increasing commitments to the idea of citizen participation in community decision-making and of increased citizen awareness of the need for information about matters which affect their lives, the movement toward the public library as a community

information resource is perhaps overdue. Several years ago New York City advanced an ambitious plan; it now appears that a program will shortly be underway in Brooklyn.[17] The ALA seems to be moving in the direction of endorsing the concept of the public library as a community information center.[22] If citizens are to be served with relevant and timely information, it seems that public libraries must increase their cooperative activities with those agencies which serve the public. The agencies in turn must be made aware of the potential of the library to act as an information center. Finally, the public must be made aware of the expanded role of the public library.

Areawide cooperatives, even for the provision of advance services and resource development cannot generally address themselves to problems of libraries which serve special clientele. Metropolitan areas, therefore, contain a third kind of cooperative activity for this function.

Service to Special Groups. Groups are frequently formed among libraries of similar types or serving similar clientele. Through cooperative agreement they seek to extend their resources for users with common interests and needs. Many consortia existed before more general cooperative efforts began, and these special groups continue to exist, either separately or as special projects within the more general cooperatives.

Academic library consortia are the most visible and seemingly numerous special groups. Of the nearly 200 arrangements listed in the *Directory of Academic Library Consortia,*[23] thirty-five are located in metropolitan areas. Some are simple two-library agreements which are perhaps limited to sharing information about expensive acquisitions, or offering special borrowing privileges to each other's students. Others are large, and may be bound together by formal agreements. These agreements are often simply statements of intent to cooperate for some purposes, and are intellectual commitments among chief campus officers to the notion of sharing resources to economize on library expenditures.

Consortia of special libraries in industry are limited in number. Proprietary concerns and the limited funding of special libraries have tended to prevent these libraries from cooperating openly and vigorously.[24] It is not unusual, however, for a group of special libraries in a limited geographic area to develop a union list of serials. Woods notes this activity is particularly useful to those libraries that rely heavily on journals but are so limited in space that they cannot maintain very large collections.[25] Often union lists are developed by the local

chapters of the Special Libraries Association. On occasion special libraries do establish more formal groups, although their participation might be limited to a few simple activities.[26] Such groups have existed in San Diego and Minneapolis, for example. Often they are joined by special subject branches of nearby universities. Special library managers, however, are frequently constrained by the profit motive of their corporations. They must justify the costs of participation in programs of cooperation in terms of measurable and direct contribution to the interests of their corporations.

One of the noteworthy, and perhaps unique, cooperative programs among special libraries is the Regional Medical Library system, established by the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and funded by the Medical Library Assistance Act. While this is not exclusively a metropolitan area library program, each of the eleven regional medical libraries that serve as nodes in the national network is located in a major library in a metropolitan area (Washington, Detroit, Cambridge, Atlanta, New York City, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, Seattle, Dallas and Lincoln). The NLM program encourages libraries to operate at the local level. Some regional groups may contain up to 100 members (usually hospital libraries) in a single metropolitan area.[27] It is difficult to conceive of another subject that could command the massive funding required to create both intellectural and physical access to information in so efficient and effective a manner. The model, however, is there for others to follow.

The potential for cooperation between public and school libraries has long intrigued various government and library officials. The issue has special importance in metropolitan areas where school populations are large and libraries that serve students are numerous. This has led to speculation that the large investment in metropolitan regions for both public and school library facilities might have more effective outcomes if the two seemingly complementary agents cooperated more, and perhaps even changed their traditional missions.

Proposals for cooperation at the elementary and secondary educational level usually call for the school library system to serve all the needs of children. Schools, it is argued, are better equipped to deal with children; interact more with teacher, parent and child; have greater political power; and hence can get more funds more readily than can public libraries. In 1970, after a study by a special committee of the Commissioner of Education, the Regents of the University of the State of New York issued a position paper with recommendations that comprehended library service through a wide array of kinds of

libraries for students at all levels.[28] The paper called for cooperation between school and public libraries for service to secondary school students. It proposed, however, that the library needs of children from preschool age through the sixth grade be filled by the school library.

School librarians endorsed the proposal, but the public library community, in a nationally prominent campaign, strongly refuted the rationale for the plan.[29] The public library, it was argued, should serve the "whole person" at all ages. The curriculum orientation of schools was cited as compulsive—an adverse influence compared to the permissiveness of public libraries. Furthermore, the school system's facilities are generally available only 180 days of the 365-day year. The Regents' proposal was never adopted.

School and public library cooperation throughout the nation has remained sporadic and weak. A recent spate of developments however, suggests that it still is a viable issue. The Estes Park Public Library recently received the loan of 1,000 children's books for a summer. The Lancaster Public Library held a workshop to familiarize local school librarians with resources. Some large metropolitan area library plans (e.g., Milwaukee) are open to participation by school and academic libraries. The subsidy to the Denver Public Library's film lending service was assumed by the state library when federal funding failed.[30] The Minneapolis Public Library once contracted with the board of education for a junior high school to provide year-round public service.[31]

Even if the idealogical conflicts could be resolved, operational problems would remain. For example, the New Haven proposal for the creation of school-community libraries has for a number of years faltered over such matters as varying pay scales for school and public librarians, what items the school and the library authorities should pay for, how to administer jointly the physical facilities, and the location of facilities that are accessible and attractive to adults.[30]

Metropolitan public libraries have long been attractive to students in urban universities. In the past it has not been unusual for these libraries to close their facilities to students to insure access for the general public. Similarly, academic libraries in metropolitan areas often must restrict access to secondary school students. Urban university libraries also tend to limit the use of their facilities by students who live nearby but commute to distant universities in the city.

Several proposals for cooperation in New York City epitomize potential solutions to this problem. At one time it was proposed that five new public library units be created, one in each borough, especially

stocked to augment the many college libraries in that city.[32] More recently, it was proposed that one strong, existing library in each borough be subsidized to augment its resources in order to assume the public burden of serving students.[33] Three public and two academic libraries were proposed for this function. In neither case has the recommendation been effected. The Mid-Manhattan Library, a separate unit of the New York Public Library, however, was established and serves as an adjunct to higher education in the area. In addition, the city government has subsidized the private research component of the New York Public Library because of its heavy service to graduate students of the city university system. Similar arrangements have been undertaken in a few other cities.

The anticipated increase in opportunities for nontraditional studies and lifelong learning endorsed by the Commission on Non-Traditional Studies will give added opportunity for metropolitan area libraries, particularly the public and museum libraries, to cooperate in serving an educational mission.[34] As a follow-up activity to the commission's study, the College Entrance Examination Board is conducting a special program to develop and demonstrate public library service to nontraditional study activities now underway in several communities.[35] While this emphasis is on a single agency—the public library—it is likely that the resources of other libraries will be required for adequate support of this style of education.

The element of cooperation in metropolitan area library service has been little studied and poorly documented; it is therefore difficult, in conclusion, to identify and describe emerging trends. The characteristics of metropolitan communities do not appear to be related to organizational or service arrangements among cooperating libraries. Several features of metropolitan library cooperation do, however, stand out. These include the recognition of the need for areawide planning, the importance of outside funding, the complexity of organizational arrangements and the lack of evaluation.

Increasing attention is being given in more metropolitan areas to the creation of organizations of libraries concerned with areawide development and utilization of resources to meet the fullest demands of all citizens. Planning seems to be a primary focus of such cooperative arrangements, and will be more prevalent in the future if the federal government succeeds in developing its proposed Information Partnership Act, which will encourage the pooling of efforts of a community's total information resources.

Another feature is the dependence on outside sources of funding to

sustain cooperative activities. In his study of public libraries in the urban metropolitan setting throughout the world Campbell concluded that the lack of permanency and insufficient funding were the principal problems of cooperation.[36] Cooperation, he found, seems to work better for small libraries faced with limited demands. It is clear that in the American experience money and formal organization are still essential ingredients for successful cooperation. It is difficult for libraries already in financial trouble to sustain a contribution to programs of cooperation that increase demand without securing additional funds.

Federal funds, chiefly Library Services and Construction Act, Title I and Title III funds, have been vitally important to cooperative programs. Where they have been withdrawn, or reductions threatened, systems in metropolitan areas have been placed in jeopardy. This seems to have been one of the chief causes, for example, of the disbanding of New York's statewide technical services organization, the Association of New York Libraries for Technical Services.[37] Though judged to be well-designed, and appealing as a replacement for some of the local public library system technical service centers, the subsidy required to sustain it until it could be self-supporting was too large for the state to undertake when federal funding was threatened. The North Bay Cooperative Library System in California was similarly troubled. By contracting its service to local libraries, it is attempting to offset the budget crisis it faced by the loss of federal subsidy.[38]

The various potential sources of funds for metropolitan area library cooperative services seem ample in number, including government subsidies, service charges or users' fees, library system membership fees, local taxing powers, contributions from foundations and local corporations, sales of publications and others. Nevertheless, general economic conditions tend to limit the purchasing power of all these sources.

Several organizational features must be noted. As stated earlier many metropolitan areas cross state lines, sometimes encompassing more than two states. Areawide planners must, therefore, be sensitive to the legal problems involved in creating an administrative and funding structure for interstate ventures. The operation of simple voluntary programs across state lines may not be troublesome. Little difficulty is encountered, for example, in creating a union list of serials and arranging interlibrary loans among college or industrial libraries in several states. It is more difficult, however, when state subsidies or

formal governmental commitments to permanent service operations are required for successful cooperative programs.

The problems and prospects of interaction among more than two states have been under study in recent months by Harry Martin, Assistant Law Librarian of the University of Texas at Austin. Martin identifies at least five mechanisms for establishing formal, legal cooperative ventures in this multijurisdictional environment: interstate compact, library authority, exercise of joint powers, federation, and contract. Martin concludes that the interstate compact is the most appropriate mechanism for a viable multistate cooperative activity.[39] A compact permits the creation of an administrative board with representative powers, and the budgeting of state funds for the cooperative programs. The Council of State Governments has produced a Model Interstate Library Compact, but it is faulty in several respects for a multistate operation. Interstate compacts are not simple to create. Among other things, an interstate compact must be approved by the United States Congress, and Congress must be one of the signatories of the compact.

The creation of a regional library authority has often been proposed as a solution to the problem of intergovernmental organization for library service. The key elements of a regional authority are that a charter is developed to provide service and the authority to use all kinds of library units to carry out its mandate. Funding is also provided, either through direct state support or through taxing powers of its own, to apply to both the public and the private sector of libraries for service offerings. Given the strength of the argument for "home rule" and the power of the notion of self-sufficiency for such political units as cities and counties, it is unlikely that many regional authorities will be created in the foreseeable future. In some areas too many separate political units already exist. An attempt to establish an Urban Services Authority for various community services in the Denver area failed in a public vote in 1973.[40] While library service was not among these included in the proposed service plan, it was assumed that library service would follow. Interestingly, the proposition carried in Denver, but failed in the surrounding area where the service needs are presumably higher. Still, the concept persists, and it does function in many areas for transportation, fire, waste disposal, and other community service. There has been a call for the creation of a library authority for Chicago and surrounding counties. This region recently voted the establishment of a regional transportation authority; the

time may be right for another vote for the same mode of development of library service.[41]

As cooperatives or consortia grow in number, the probability increases that there will be overlap of several systems or networks within a given region. This might complicate organizational and political problems. On the other hand, there is sufficient evidence that cooperative systems can co-exist and indeed work together to suggest that the problem of overlap is not insurmountable. There is need for clearer specification of the mission and boundaries of cooperatives. Local effort with full participation of every library whose resources will be needed or whose clientele will be affected is essential. New York offers an excellent example for such a local operation. Its 3-Rs program to improve reference and research library resources is state sponsored, but local citizens must organize and apply for a charter for recognized status as a region in the system. Its bylaws must provide for representation from the entire community. And while a 3-Rs region will perforce overlap and may contain more than one of the public library systems already in existence in its area, it must not cut through any such system. Thus no public library system will find its members in more than one 3-Rs region. This rule simplifies decisions and prevents disruptive competition in the distribution of services in various parts of the system. Furthermore, each 3-Rs region must set its own goals and plans, and develop its own projects and programs of service. This insures local responsiveness.[10]

Many libraries now find themselves members of more than one system or network. It has been pointed out that a single academic library might belong to as many as fifteen networks.[42] The potential administrative overload and dilution of its resources are apparent as is the potential for conflict in rules and protocols for access to resources and services. These may be dysfunctional to the user and to the viability of one or more of the systems.

On the other hand, metropolitan area libraries, particularly the large ones, may be involved in cooperative activities that are not essentially designed for metropolitan area service. Hierarchical state systems to extend basic library service may reach into a metropolitan area to tap large libraries as regional nodes or system back-up libraries. The Chicago Public Library serves as one of four reference and resource libraries in the Illinois library statewide service network. The New York Public Library serves as a resource library in the New York State Interlibrary Loan system (NYSILL). In another mode of operation, a

strong metropolitan area library might form the hub of a network that reaches out to serve less populated areas, as for example do the regional medical libraries in the NLM network. This places a burden on the large library that might weaken its contribution to the goals of metropolitan library service. Subsidies to the large library for remote services, however, might also strengthen its local services.

Although the typical metropolitan areas' library resources may be rich, they may still be insufficient to serve some advanced or esoteric subject information needs even through cooperation. Some libraries have found that they must interact with libraries in other regions. Metropolitan public libraries within a state may, of course, be linked together through a statewide network for standard public services. In such an arrangement they interact chiefly in a hierarchical structure through a state library.

More often, however, consortia of this type are created by direct interaction of libraries of similar types or with similar needs, without participation in local or state programs of cooperation. Many examples of cooperatives among libraries in different metropolitan areas exist. Libraries do not form these groups particularly because they are in metropolitan areas, or because they serve a metropolitan constituency. To the extent that they are able to strengthen service to their own primary clientele, however, they add to the quality of library service in the area. Many examples of such cooperatives exist. The cooperative group recently created by Harvard, Yale, Columbia and the New York Public Library indicates that even the richest of resources cannot alone sustain the service expected of it.

In the future, interregional networking may be a phenomenon of some strength and importance. Discussions of national plans for library service frequently refer to the desirability of creating a national network of libraries and information centers by linking local, regional and state systems. The recommendations of the ALA Conference on Interlibrary Communications and Information Networks, for example, called for a national general-purpose network of libraries and information centers, and stated that the network "should not be a monolithic structure but instead, a series of networks organized to meet local information needs."[43] It was assumed that local library and information networks would continue to develop, and that national policy should address the process of evolution of these networks "to become a part of a coordinated set of interconnecting knowledge centers available to all disciplines at all levels of society and in every

geographic region."[44] National planning effort has recently emerged from the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. Its draft statement of a program for national library service calls for strong support for many elements of network development, including the establishment of technical standards to insure compatability for interconnection of local networks, the provision of adequate funding, and the establishment of policy, goals and responsibilities by various segments of government with regard to library service.[45]

Cooperative activities are seldom adequately evaluated. The performance of a few library systems have been examined, as for example Warner's study of interlibrary lending in Maryland,[46] the Ellis, *et al.* study of the performance of NYSILL[47] and Casey's analysis of the Oklahoma teletype network.[48] It is impossible to generalize from so many varied studies. It is also difficult to utilize the results of these evaluations in systems design elsewhere. The studies suggest that cooperation frequently fails to achieve goals of better service and indicate factors that might be examined for cause. In New York State it was found that poor searching and referral techniques and restrictive lending policies contributed to the problem of unfilled requests in NYSILL.[47] Among a few cooperative ventures studied by Slanker, cooperation did not seem to improve service as well as consolidation of library agencies.[49] In Illinois, Stenstrom noted that the fear of loss of local autonomy and control was the most commonly expressed concern of librarians and trustees with regard to joining systems.[50] Blasingame and Deproso speculate that "the failure of leadership to think through what implications system has is reflected in rather poor decisions in the utilization of resources."[51] They argue that the failure may be due to the absence of a general theory of system as guide to implementation. Criteria for evaluation of cooperation have been suggested (a more effective organizational pattern; more effective staff functioning; improved access to materials; revision of collection and service policies; streamlining of library procedures; staff retraining; costs stabilized or reduced; and new services introduced or existing ones expanded),[52] but they have not yet been applied in a systematic way to any significant study of metropolitan library cooperation.

Several years ago, a survey of library and information networks concluded that we had only partial knowledge for the design of network configurations and for determining why a library or information center should join a network. The survey noted that "no recognized focal point for professional leadership and planning—for

developing the general knowledge needed to design, manage, and assess networks—has emerged."[53] This condition unfortunately has not yet improved.

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